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NASA Awards Launch Service Task Order for Aspera's Galaxy Mission

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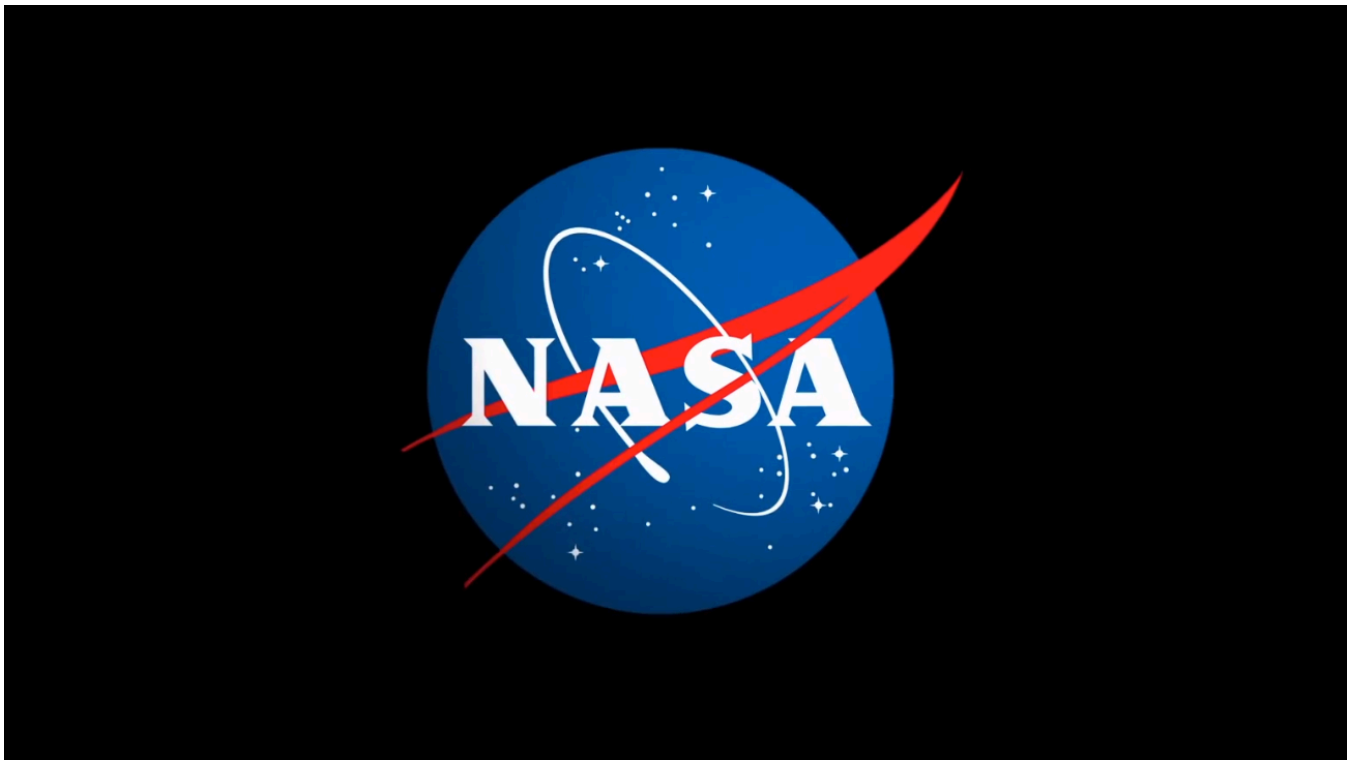

Credit: NASA

NASA has selected Rocket Lab USA Inc. of Long Beach, California, to launch the agency's Aspera mission, a SmallSat to study galaxy formation and evolution, providing new insights into how the universe works.

The selection is part of NASA's Venture-Class Acquisition of Dedicated and Rideshare (VADR) launch services contract. This contract allows the agency to make fixed-price indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity launch service task order awards during VADR's five-year ordering period, with a maximum total contract value of $300 million.

Through the observation of ultraviolet light, Aspera will examine hot gas in the space between galaxies, called the intergalactic medium. The mission will study the inflow and outflow of gas from galaxies, a process thought to contribute to star formation.

Aspera is part of NASA's Pioneers Program in the Astrophysics Division at NASA Headquarters in Washington, which funds compelling astrophysics science at a lower cost using small hardware and modest payloads. The principal investigator for Aspera is Carlos Vargas at the University of Arizona in Tucson. NASA's Launch Services Program, based at the agency's Kennedy Space Center in Florida, manages the VADR contract.

To learn more about NASA's Aspera mission and the Pioneers Program, visit:

https://go.nasa.gov/42U1Wkn

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